

#AVHWHATSNEXT

STRATEGIC SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE SCIENCE SYSTEM

commissioned by the
Alexander von
Humboldt Foundation



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foresight report:

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Scenario 1: Values – a competitive advantage

Trust, integrity and social responsibility
become a decisive competitive
advantage for science and institutions.



2

Scenario 2: Shared international responsibility

International cooperation, science
diplomacy, open science and shared
responsibility remain the foundation
for global science.



3

Scenario 3: Regulated science

Science operates in an increasingly
regulated environment with
overt compliance requirements,
comprehensive monitoring and
creeping self-censorship.



4

Scenario 4: Geopolitical fragmentation

Geopolitical blocs and new
boundaries hamper cooperation
and knowledge sharing between
regions.



Foresight as a method of strategy development

Organisations today face global challenges that increasingly call into question the viability of traditional planning tools. Geopolitical fragmentation, digital transformation and the erosion of the scientific system characterise an environment of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity – in short: a VUCA environment.

Foresighting describes a structured process for identifying and assessing possible future developments in order to generate action-oriented knowledge for decision-making. It does not claim to make deterministic predictions, but rather understands the future as a space of possibilities with various plausible development pathways.

About the Humboldt Foundation

For 70 years, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has been promoting outstanding international researchers who come to Germany on the strength of a Humboldt Research Fellowship or Research Award. The Foundation sponsors people, not projects, across both countries and disciplines.



Supporting outstanding researchers worldwide.

The Foundation's selection committees make their decisions solely based on academic quality and the applicants' recognisable potential.



With this mission, the Humboldt Foundation is unique on the international funding landscape. The Humboldt Network now embraces more than 30,000 individuals worldwide.



Philipp Schwartz Initiative

The Initiative protects academic freedom and provide at-risk researchers with a safe environment to continue their work.

Since 2016, the Humboldt Foundation has been setting a vigorous example for academic freedom: the Philipp Schwartz Initiative enables German universities and research institutions to host foreign researchers who are at risk so that they can continue their academic work unhindered.

Imprint

Publisher:

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

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The Humboldt Foundation's activities are mainly financed by public funders, especially the Federal Foreign Office (AA) as the institutional funder as well as the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union (EU).

Funded by:



Auswärtiges Amt



Bundesministerium
für Forschung, Technologie
und Raumfahrt

The foresight report was written by the Centre for Responsible Research and Innovation at Fraunhofer IAO.